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Message Text

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PAGE 01 MOSCOW 01300 011106Z

20/70
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 OC-05 CCO-00 L-02 CPR-01 RSC-01 /022 W
---------- 125455
R 291535Z JAN 75
FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6689
INFO AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 1300

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (PARA 1 IMI 1 LINE 6 - NOW VICE NOT)

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: ACOM,UR
SUBJECT: NEW SOVIET PROCEDURES FOR UNACCOMPANIED DIPLOMATIC MAIL

REF: MOSCOW A. 0934; B. 0935

1. EMBASSY CONTINUING EXPERIENCE DIFFICULTIES OUTGOING UNCLASSIFIED DIPLOMATIC POUCHES AS SOVIETS INSIST THEY BE SENT THROUGH NEW PROCEDURES OUTLINED REF A. EMBASSY HAS NOT YET ATTEMPTED SEND UNCLASSIFIED POUCH VIA PAN AM SINCE FORMER SCHEDULE VIA LUFTHANSA PROVIDED MORE EXPEDITIOUS SERVICE, BUT WILL NOW UNDERTAKE TEST CASE.

2. DESPITE NEW SOVIET PROCEDURES OUTLINED REF A EMBASSY HAS THUS FAR BEEN ABLE OBTAIN AS IN PAST INCOMING UNCLASSIFIED POUCHES ON TARMAC FROM PAN AM AND THIRD COUNTRY AIRLINES BY PRESENTING EMBASSY LETTER TO CUSTOMS OFFICIAL AT PLANESIDE AND PICKING UP POUCHES THERE. UNABLE PREDICT HOW LONG THIS PRACTICE WILL BE PERMITTED, PARTICULARLY WITH REFERENCE THIRD COUNTRY AIRLINES, SINCE IT DOES NOT CONFORM NEW SOVIET PROCEDURES OUTLINED REF A. EMBASSY WOULD. HOWEVER, VIGOROUSLY OBJECT SHOULD SOVIETS ATTEMPT APPLY NEW PROCEDURES TO RECEIVING OR SENDING UNCLASSIFIED POUCHES VIA PAN AM SINCE THIS WOULD VIOLATE 1968/1969 SOVIET U.S. AGREEMENT.

3. IN LIGHT FOREGOING SITUATION EMBASSY PLANS SEND
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UNCLASSIFIED POUCHES WITH COURIERS DEPARTING MOSCOW

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FOR VIENNA ON MONDAY, WEDNESDAY AND FRIDAY. FROM VIENNA, POUCHES WILL THEN BE ROUTED UNACCOMPANIED TO WASHINGTON.

4. WHILE THIS PROCEDURE MAY POSSIBLY INVOLVE SLIGHTLY GREATER TRANSIT TIME TO U.S., THERE WOULD BE NO ADDITIONAL FREIGHT COSTS INVOLVED SINCE POUCHES WOULD BE BELLY LOADED AS AIR FREIGHT. FURTHER, THERE WOULD BE SOME SAVING IN OVERTIME PAYMENTS TO C AND R PERSONNEL WHO CAN UNDER THIS ARRANGEMENT REDUCE TRIPS TO AIRPORT BY SENDING ALL OUTGOING POUCHES WITH COURIER.
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